

result. Among millions there will, of course, be a great deal of ignorance and dulness. To the end of time the cobbler will always be a poor creature beyond the reach of his last. His criticisms, if he criticises or notices at all, will not be worth much. But within the range of his last they will be invaluable. If it can be done, it will be worth while to watch the mechanics in the machine-room, the silk weaver in the Lyons or British galleries of manufacture, and the other artisans mustering in the several departments, to hear the hum of their remarks, and measure the depth of their admiration. How much is there for an English workman to learn! What walls of prejudice, what masses of stupidity, to be removed! When shall we hear the last of that national boast, so well-timed in the matter of hardware, so ill-timed when we come within the regions of taste, that English workmanship is indestructible? How long will men vaunt the eternal ugliness of their handiwork? The material character of the Exhibition, which utterly excludes philosophy, literature, pure science, and even some of the fine arts, seems to forbid some more romantic speculations, which nevertheless will not wholly be suppressed. Though this be substantially a mechanical and artistic competition, yet it is difficult not to ascribe to it a far higher destiny. The games of antiquity were little more than races and wrestling matches in themselves, but round that simple nucleus all the arts and sciences were soon found to assemble. We can hardly doubt that this great Olympiad of art, that has hitherto been so successful, so splendid, and so glorious, will exhibit an ever-expanding circle of useful and noble influences. That is the work which we hope to see beginning in good earnest this day—the gradual raising of our industrial classes from among lamentable incultivation, ignorance, and moral debasement."

#### THE PUBLIC MEETING ON ARCHITECTURAL COMPETITIONS.

THE Architectural Association has now for a long period exerted itself to bring about some practical decision of the profession in relation to this subject. A public meeting has been convened, and the undersigned have been deputed to communicate with certain architectural societies and architects, with a view to interest them in the matter.

While thus engaged, they have had many opportunities of becoming more or less acquainted with the animus of the profession on this topic. Many gentlemen approve of the attempt to reform the system, and advocate the adoption of the Association's code of Regulations, or something similar in it; while others, either by open confession or tacit indifference, look with despair on all efforts to ameliorate the system, the inherent evils of which seem insurmountable. A third party denounce the system of competition itself, as an unclean thing, which respectable members of the profession ought no longer to tolerate. These last (were a movement in that direction indicated) would evidently lend their aid to establish what may be termed an *anti-competition society*, pledging its members to abstain from all public competitions whatever; not because they fail to recognise the advantages of fair open competition in architecture, but because they see no prospect whatever of its attainment; and feel satisfied that, in the main, the custom of gratuitously tendering his services to the public is alike fatal to the respectability of the architect, and the advancement of the art he cultivates.

While, therefore, the undersigned feel that if the system itself is to be perpetuated, and its attendant evils simply mitigated, no better course can be advised than the (temporary) adoption of the code of the Architectural Association, they hereby desire to record their own private impression that it is perfectly competent for any architect attending the meeting at Lyon's-inn to propose the absolute abandonment of the system of competition altogether. One thing is quite certain, that some practical, decisive step must be taken by

the professional body, or matters will perhaps become by this very movement utterly irremediable. As regards the Architectural Association, it merely provides an arena for the public meeting: its committee are prepared if need be to submit a set of resolutions affecting the amendment only of competitions; but as to the conduct of the meeting, the Association is actually pledged to nothing, simply pointing, as it has uniformly done, to the report of the Institute; which, it must be borne in mind, does by no means over ardently recommend the continuance of a system which, as has been before stated, many respectable members of the profession, when pressed for an opinion, do utterly repudiate.

One curious fact may be mentioned in addition. It is this: that they who have, in the columns of THE BUILDER and elsewhere, been the loudest in bewailing the unfairness of this or that particular competition case, have been the tardiest in coming forward with suggestions for even mitigating the evils of the system they deplore.

W. B. COLLING, Hon. Secs. of the Architectural Association.  
J. P. SAUND, Hon. Sec. of the Competitions Committee.  
W. YOUNG,

The hon. secretary of the Institute of Architects says, in reply to a letter addressed to the Institute by the Association,—"The council fully appreciate the importance of the object the Architectural Association have in view in their proposed meeting of the Profession to consider the mode of regulating the terms of competition designs, and they trust that it will be the means of eliciting some useful suggestions. With reference to the portion of your letter which solicits an opinion on the subject, the council are not prepared at present to offer any suggestions beyond those contained in their published report on competitions, to which they beg to call your attention, as the subject was at that time (1839) fully considered; but I am desirous to add, that the council will at all times give due attention to any proposition they may be favoured with which has for its object the amelioration of the evils of public or other competitions for architectural designs, and which their professional brethren may think proper to submit to their consideration."

We earnestly invite our readers to attend the meeting, and to aid in effecting its important object.

#### PICTURES PURCHASED BY THE ART-UNION OF LONDON.

The following is a list of the principal pictures purchased by the prizeholders up to the present time:—

"Don't be afraid—You shan't fall," J. Tennant (from S.B.A.), 157l. 10s.; "The Diversion of the Moccotuti," R. McInnes (R.A.), 136l. 10s.; "Bonville, on the road from Geneva," J. D. Harding (R.A.), 89l. 5s.; "Dorothea," J. G. Middleton (N.I.), 84l.; "Who's there," T. H. Maguire (R.A.), 80l.; "Scene in Glen Beg," T. M. Richardson (W.C.S.), 73l. 10s.; "Lady Jane Grey," J. G. Middleton (N.I.), 70l.; "Seven for sixpence," J. F. Herring (S.B.A.), 70l.; "Landscape and Cattle," G. Cole (S.B.A.), 52l. 10s.; "A Scene in Knowle Park," W. F. Witherington (R.A.), 60l.; "Stacking the Autumn Hay Crop," G. A. Williams (N.I.), 60l.; "Poor Mariners," T. Danby (B.I.), 60l.; "Heidelberg on the Neckar," F. V. de Fleury (R.A.), 50l.; "Arcadians," G. Patten A.R.A. (R.A.), 50l.; "Above Richmond, Yorkshire," J. W. Allen (S.B.A.), 50l.; "Saturday Night," T. Clater (S.B.A.), 50l.; "View of the Black Mountain, Bredalbans," Copley Fielding (W.C.S.), 52l. 10s.; "Entrance to Burlington Quay," A. Clint (S.B.A.), 40l.; "Bull's Close, Edinburgh," J. Drummond (B.I.), 40l.; "Tower on the Vrydag's Market at Ghent," W. Callow (W.C.S.), 40l.; "Interior of a Highland Cottage," J. H. Mole (N.W.C.S.), 31l. 10s.; "On the road from Foligno Spello," W. Oliver (R.A.), 25l.; "The View Holloa," G. Morley (R.A.), 20l.; "Highland Peat Gatherers," J. H. Mole (N.W.C.S.), 26l. 5s.;

"Castle on the Moors," G. Cole (S.B.A.), 20l.; "Near Stockbridge," G. Cole (S.B.A.), 20l.; "The Village Smithy," G. Dodgson (W.C.S.), 20l.; "Near Crawley, Surrey," J. W. Allen (S.B.A.), 20l.

#### CONVERSAZIONI AND FRIENDLY MEETINGS.

**Lord de Grey's Conversazioni.**—On the 23rd, Lord de Grey, as president of the Institute of Architects, received the members of the Institute at his house in St. James's-square, and invited a large number of the aristocracy of rank and talent to meet them: we ought to add, too, of beauty; for the President, continuing a course which he was the first to take in meetings of this character, did not forget the ladies. The tables held many collections of sketches by David Roberts, Lake Price, and others.

The following members of the Institute, and gentlemen invited by the Institute (noted down without any attempt at arrangement), were present:—

Messrs. John Gibson, Barry, E. Blore, Messrs. Gourlier, Mr. C. Knight, Rev. R. Burgess, Dr. Dickson, Messrs. Milne, S. Smirke, Donaldson, C. B. Thurston, W. A. Boulnois, C. Mayhew, H. Oliver, Prof. Miller, Messrs. Rich. Redgrave, J. Peacock, J. Ferguson, R. Cole, J. Noble, Henry Hodge, R. Wallace, H. H. Burnell, R. C. Baxter, H. Williams, E. Scott, R. J. Withers, A. R. Dobson, C. Fowler, Boys, Garling, Sibley, Nicholls, Peter Legg, C. C. Nelson, Geo. Judge, J. P. Boyce, W. Laxton, W. P. Griffith, G. H. Drew, Fuller, F. W. Porter, Wadmore, Hopkins, Baker, Kendall, Sir Frederick Madden, Messrs. Geo. Scharf, Inman, Toynbee, Phipson, G. Pownall, Very Rev. R. H. Froude, Messrs. L. Stride, W. Beck, G. Godwin, Salvin, Warton, Fulljames, T. H. Wyatt, P. Bryant, Charles Landseer, H. A. Renton, E. T. Parris, W. Lindley, J. H. Foley, E. H. Martineau, H. Ashton, W. Twopenny, S. Wood, R. P. Pope, Rev. John Barlow, Messrs. Errington, Grogan, Mylne, Buckley, Banks, Lewis, Whichcord, Mocatta, T. J. Francis, John Martin, Moore, Geo. Jones, W. C. Marshall, J. Leitch, Thos. Landseer, Rich. Bell, J. Y. Akerman, B. Ferrey, J. G. Crace, Mosley, A. Allom, C. Barry, jun., J. R. Gowan, G. Vulliamy, B. Green, Harris, Dighton, Leicester, Roach Smith, Bury, Penrose, Stow, J. G. Hursthouse, Crofton Croker, W. Wyon, Thos. Smith, H. Roberts, T. G. Hall, Murray, Maclure, Knowles, Pettigrew, Williams, Good, jun., R. Forster, S. H. Christie, J. Bellamy, G. A. Burns, C. B. Greenough, John Bell, C. Fowler, jun., Butecher, J. Pennefather, Fenton, John Davies, C. Eales, Salvin, jun., G. L. Taylor, Goodridge, H. Howell, Norman, &c.

**The Engineers' Conversazioni.**—Mr. Cobett, F.R.S., as president, received a very numerous party at the Institution, on the 27th, when numerous models and works of art filled every corner of the house. H.R.H. Prince Albert was present.

**Lord Londesborough's Conversazioni.**—On the 21st, the Earl and Countess of Londesborough opened their house in Piccadilly to a large number of guests, amongst whom art, science, and literature were all worthily represented. While Lord de Grey's evenings are distinguished by collections of drawings and works of fine art, and the president of the Engineers' soirées by models and inventions, Lord Londesborough gives a peculiar feature to his rooms by collections of rare antiquities and objects of vertu.

**Lord Rosse's Third Conversazioni** will be held on the 31st inst. The second (on the 17th) was very numerously attended.

**The Conversazioni at the Society of Arts** have been well conducted and very fully attended. On the 28th, the rooms were crowded, and there was a very interesting collection of objects of interest.

**The Lord Mayor's Conversazione.**—The Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress have issued cards for a gathering of literary, artistic, and scientific men, both foreign and domestic, on the 4th of June.